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C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 000545

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KTIP](#) [ELAB](#) [VM](#) [QA](#)  
SUBJECT: QATAR TO OPEN DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS IN VIETNAM BY  
YEAR'S END

Classified By: CDA Mirembe L. Nantongo for reasons 1.4 (b and d).

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(SBU) KEY POINTS  
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-- Vietnamese consul in Doha Mau Tien Duong stated in the August 28 edition of the English-language newspaper Gulf Times that Qatar would open an embassy in Hanoi and a consulate in Ho Chi Minh City by the end of 2009.

-- Duong said that Amir Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani and Vietnamese PM Nguyen Tan Dung agreed to open the two diplomatic missions when the latter visited Doha in March.

-- Embassy First Secretary Doan Kien Trung told us that Qatar and Vietnam are expected to hold ministerial talks soon to discuss the implementation of the bilateral agreements signed during the PM's visit.

-- Duong said that Vietnam hoped to export more laborers to Qatar. He underscored that they must be "select workers with strict discipline."

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(C) COMMENTS  
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-- Consul Duong's comment that only "select workers with strict discipline" would be allowed to work in Qatar is revealing, and is as much a requirement of the Qatari government as a pledge by the Vietnamese. Embassy contacts in the Qatari MFA and security services have reported that Vietnamese workers in Qatar become violent when feuds break out among them.

-- There are no reliable data on the number of Vietnamese currently working in Qatar. Duong suggested that there are 1,500, but this is far short of the 8,000 claimed by then-Ambassador Phung The Long in September 2008 when Qatar and Vietnam signed an agreement to establish a 1 billion USD fund to support joint investments. Whatever the true figure, it is far short of the 25,000 Vietnamese workers Qatar agreed to accept in February. Given the problems Qatar has experienced with Vietnamese workers, that figure is unlikely to increase significantly any time soon.

-- Qatar's commitment to opening diplomatic offices in Vietnam is not surprising given that Vietnam opened an embassy in Doha in March and the GOQ maintains a policy of reciprocity in this area.

End Key Points and Comments.

1. (SBU) On August 28, the local English-language newspaper Gulf Times quoted Vietnamese consul Mau Tien Duong as saying that Qatar would open an embassy in Hanoi and an Embassy in Ho Chi Minh City by the end of 2009. According to Duong, this commitment was made by Amir Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani

to Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung when the latter visited Doha in March.

¶2. (SBU) First Secretary Doan Kien Trung separately confirmed that the Qatar-Vietnam Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee would soon hold ministerial talks aimed at implementing the bilateral agreements that were signed during the PM's visit. These agreements dealt with investments, taxation, aviation, and agriculture.

¶3. (SBU) Duong also estimated that the Vietnamese community in Qatar numbers 1,500, and its members are employed in diverse fields such as construction, information technology, and energy. He said that Vietnam hoped to send more expatriate laborers to Qatar, with the caveat that they must be "select workers with strict discipline." He expressed hope that the recent formation of the Working Board of the Vietnamese Community in Qatar, a community organization designed to support expatriate workers, would facilitate cooperation between the two countries. He also noted that community organizers had recently launched a community website ([www.vietnam-qatar.com](http://www.vietnam-qatar.com)).  
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